

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian ✠ Blantyre Synod

Mulanje Mission Hospital

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PRIMARY HEALTH CARE DEPARTMENT

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME
ANNUAL REPORT

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1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019

Project beneficiaries: Households within Traditional Authorities Chikumbu and Mabuka
Mulanje District, Southern Malawi

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*Sharing out ceremony of a Village Savings and Loans Committee,
Tambala Village*

1. Introduction

With funding from the Good Little Company, Fane Valley, Blacksburg Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian World Service and Development and others, Mulanje Mission Hospital through its Primary Health Care (PHC) department in partnership with Local Government sectors continued with the implementation of the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme in Mulanje District during the period under review (July, 2018-June, 2019).

The focus for the past financial year was on farmer skills development, under the Model Village Approach (MVA). Livestock trainings and procurement, field days and community gardening have improved both crop and animal husbandry practices and adoption of appropriate farming technologies which take into consideration the climatic variations within the targeted area.

The project added 9 new farmer clubs from Group Village Head (GVH) Misanjo's area. In this area, SLP works on conservation of Mlatho Hills, a 40 hectare reforestation project, and protection and rehabilitation of river banks. These are the Ruo and Lichenya rivers. Under this expansion, the number of farmers clubs has increased from 12 to 21 with a total of 896 direct beneficiaries.

New solar powered irrigation schemes have been completed at Bololo, Mwamadi and Wasi. The SLP also supports ten primary schools through the School Gardening Programme.

Primary schools participating in the School Gardening Programme	
Samson	Nachiwale
Khunguni	Kachere
Likhubula	Chibathi
Kachere	Sikoy
Misanjo	Ngolowera



Conservation agriculture field, Sembezi Village

The interventions under the program started at different times due to seasonality. All the activities were aimed at dealing with the food security, restoring the environment, economic empowerment and reducing malnutrition in the impact area. The intervention for this reporting period has covered 93.0% of the project activities planned for 2018/2019 season. Other activities under the project have achieved 100% plus due to good support from the donors, management and the community at large. Activities like the catchment conservation of Mlatho Hills and Ruo River have been fully supported and adopted by the community members.

2. Activities carried out

The activities/interventions achieved for the period under review included:

- Construction of three irrigation schemes – all solar powered, at Bololo, Mwamadi and Wasi villages.
- Drilling of two new boreholes at Namijingo and Tambala villages
- Construction of Bololo Community Grain Bank (under construction)
- Farmer capacity building in various interventions
- Provision of agricultural support aimed at promoting crop diversification
- Promoting fruit and vegetable production
- Support of reforestation, soil and water conservation technologies including small-scale irrigation practices.
- Support innovative food processing and storage methods
- Promotion of OVC animal husbandry (Pass-on Program)
- Support activities for generation and proper management of increased income
- Training of para-vets and provision of mobility as bicycles



Construction of Bololo Irrigation Scheme underway



Cooking demonstration

3. Lessons learned

In the course of implementing this years' Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, several lessons were learned. This section of the report briefly presents some key lessons and insights drawn from project experience that may be applicable to the next phase of SLP activities in Mulanje.

3.1 Income generating activities

Income Generating Activities (IGAs) were enhanced in all farmer clubs and members respectively. Some of the groups initiated their own IGAs like Sweet potato & tree seedling production at Bololo village, honey production in many villages. One youth club from Chilembwe Village managed to raise up to K350, 000.00 from honey sales. This was one of the best examples to other youth clubs. The introduction of bee keeping at Mlatho Hills has relieved pressure on the natural resources in the hills and the results are good as is witnessed by the coverage of the regenerated trees on the hillsides. In the 2019/2020 season, we plan that some social enterprises will be initiated or up-scaled. These include bee keeping and candle making from beeswax, energy stoves production, livestock pass-on programmes and increase of the area available for farming under irrigation. This is planned for villages around Mmamela.

3.2 Inclusion of important stakeholders

Involvement of different stakeholders like government agricultural extension workers, teachers and the community at large has assisted to increase the coverage and timely completion of activities. Activities like trainings and community outreach were well

coordinated and have yielded positive results e.g. increased adoption and replication of some technologies.



Para-Vets receiving bicycles following completion of training

The encouragement of farmers to use local technologies in making organic fertilizer have reduced the 'dependence syndrome' farmers previously suffered from. The use of local fertilizer (Mbeya) has improved crop production as witnessed by most farmers who replicated the technology.

3.3 Training of Para-Vets and Leadfarmers

The training of Para-vets (Livestock Lead Farmers) and the Lead Farmers has greatly assisted the project to reach-out to more community members as these volunteers reside in the same communities. There is need to increase the numbers and trainings of these lead farmers so that more intended beneficiaries are reached.

3.4 School gardening

The school gardening program has proven to be the best learning platform for agriculture and entrepreneurship for pupils in primary schools and also improves the nutrition status of pupils through the school feeding program (Likuni Phala production). In the year just ended, the production of soya and maize has tremendously improved from 4128kgs for 2017/2018 to 5626kgs for 2018/2019 season in ten primary schools despite the heavy rains and a pest attack. The involvement of relevant school structures (committees) and the entire community has assisted in the promotion of school garden activities as compared to last season where we only involved teachers and pupils. The introduction of extra activities in the school gardening project like improved sanitation and "plastic free schools" has boosted the morale of the project. Each school is encouraged to spend one hour per week to remove all plastic around the school. In order to encourage pupils and teachers to take part in the program, the project is expected to introduce a trophy for the best school during the 2019/2020 season.



Field day, Sembezi Village

3.5 The Thandizani Resource Centre

At the Thandizani Resource Centre, we have been able to upgrade our work environment with a computer, printer and modem for internet connection. The water supply for the garden has greatly improved as compared to last year. This has improved learning at the centre where many trainings are carried out throughout the year.

3.6 Challenges

A challenge to work on is timely procurement of farming inputs, as these are time dependent. The involvement of prequalified suppliers may help here. Opportunities are highlighted in the above paragraphs.

4. Plans for the coming year

The final selection for five new “model villages” will be done through discussions at the community level with local development structures ADCs and VDCs in relation to the criteria for qualification. In the coming year, the project will run two phases of the model village, the phases are the “Livelihood Security Phase” for the new five new model villages and “Specialization Phase” for the four current model villages. Some of the planned activities are:

- Identifying and training new Lead Farmers from five new model villages.
- Identifying and training of Para-Vets
- Promotion of social enterprises of different models in different villages
- Enhancing environmental management through agro-forestry and natural regeneration in all the environmental hotspots, including a large area around Mlatho Hills.

5. Conclusions

The third year of the Sustainable Livelihood Programme has been very successful for the community. The Model Village Approach is an ideal extension methodology in our context. It addresses issues relating to climate change like food security, nutrition security and economic security which benefits the community greatly. The MVA approach helps the community become experts in managing their natural resources as well as their families – resulting in community asset creation, better yields, increased profit, improved nutritional status, and a healthy productive population.

In conclusion the project has been successful in the sense that it created a positive impact towards preparedness and building of resilience amongst local communities. However, much remains to be done to raise resilience even further. With the impending effects of climate change, improved adaptive capacity of communities must be the goal - this will require more time and new alliances with partners that hold expertise in issues of climate change.



Irrigation Planning Meeting, Bololo Village



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*Income generation from
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Sharing out ceremony, Village Savings and Loans Committee, Wasi Village